



Dear MIP&L members and friends,

FIRST PARISH NEEDHAM, UUA IS AN ENERGY STAR



First Parish in Needham is the first house of worship in Massachusetts to receive the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star label, the national symbol for protecting the environment through superior energy efficiency.

The First Parish meeting house was built in 1836 and is the oldest public building in Needham. A few years ago they knocked down their old parish hall and built a new one with state of the art energy efficiency built in. The new building has reduced First Parish's utility costs 50% and their carbon footprint by 43 percent even though it's 25% larger and now air conditioned. Water use in the new building is down 40% from renovation levels. These dramatic reductions were achieved with:

- Installation of a 92% efficient gas-fired boiler
- An improved ventilation system that allows for heat recovery
- Separate temperature control for all spaces
- Extensive passive heating along with "free-cooling" using CO2 sensors
- High-efficiency air conditioning, with eco-friendly refrigerants
- High-efficiency light fixtures throughout, and motion-controlled switches in many rooms
- Energy Star appliances
- A timer on the water heater
- High R-rated insulation
- High-efficiency argon-filled windows, and
- Low-flow toilets, with separate settings for liquid and solid waste and automatic low-flush flush urinals

"It's a spiritual issue," said the Rev. John Buehrens, pastor of the Unitarian Universalist church. "Stewardship of the planet and a realization of the fragility of the creation and our responsibility of preserving its beauty is absolutely central to our religious values." First Parish's work reflects their commitment to the seventh principle of Unitarian Universalism — respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. That commitment is further embodied in the Green Sanctuary Initiative a congregation wide effort to live mindfully upon the earth.

Bill Peters, the church's green team leader, said the church is heeding biblical commands to care for creation, but also wanted to decrease the impact of a coal-burning power plant. "The more electricity we consume, the more that that power plant has to pollute our air," he said. For more about MIP&L member, First Parish's efforts go to www.MIPandL.org and click on **Success Stories**.

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE IS THE FIRST ON A SERIES ON THE TEACHINGS OF DIFFERENT FAITHS ABOUT WHY WE SHOULD CARE FOR CREATION AND THOSE AFFECTED BY CLIMATE CHANGE

RAMADAN — AN ECO-FRIENDLY MONTH

By Zainab Lakhani, MIP&L Intern



Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic Calendar. It is a revered and holy month for Muslims all over the world. According to Islamic texts it is in this month that the Holy Qur'an was revealed from God to the Prophet Mohammed through the archangel Gabriel in the year 610 AD. The Prophet Mohammed then asked all Muslims to spend this month in fasting, praying and other holy acts as a sign of respect and reverence.

The process of being hungry during daylight hours on a typical Ramadan day, reminds a person of the difficulties and hunger felt every day by children and the old and weak, who suffer because of scarcity of food. In Islam, a Muslim of age is excused from fasting if he/she is unable to do so due to infirmities. However, it is commanded upon them to make up for days of fasting missed when able to do so, or to feed a person who cannot afford their own food.

This reminder and time to reflect (you may not notice until you fast, but eating takes up a lot of time in a day!) makes people care more for their starving brethren. Less use of appliances, cars, and other materials will mean less carbon emissions into the atmosphere, which will mean less drought induced starvation for people in underdeveloped countries who don't have the resources or money to deal with these effects.

The Qur'an lays down a very distinct responsibility for mankind, in that he is to be responsible for the Earth; "Behold, thy Lord said to the angels: 'I will create a vicegerent on earth' ..." (Qur'an, 2: 30). The month of Ramadan is a time for Muslims all over this great nation of ours to sympathize with their fellow human beings in arid climates who are thirsty and starving. Hopefully the 'waste not', 'want not' spirit of Ramadan will inspire Muslims and others throughout the year.

GET A FREE HOME ENERGY AUDIT TO QUALIFY FOR REBATES AND ZERO INTEREST LOANS

If you are convinced that we as faithful members of society have a duty to look after the beautiful home we call the Earth then start a pilgrimage to energy efficiency by signing up for a free home energy audit. Why? For starters, it is the faithful thing to do.

MIP&L is participating in a statewide effort to get more people to sign up for free MassSave energy audits. To sign up just send an email with your name, address, phone number and email address to: MIPandL@MIPandL.org and ask for a free home energy audit.

An evaluation of your home's energy efficiency is conducted by an expert who will provide you with a list of recommendations and available financial incentives. You will be eligible to receive

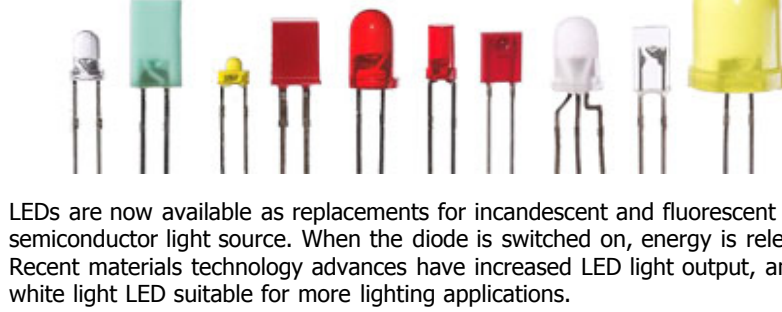
- Free Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs);
- 75% reimbursement on costs of insulation up to \$2,000; and
- A HEAT loan, a 0% interest loan of up to \$15,000 for upgrades to heating and hot water equipment. This is definitely an offer to take advantage of.

Implement the recommendations and you can lower your carbon footprint by 25% and lower your energy bill by even more. Electricity costs in MA have increased on average 6% over the past 30 years, and there's no telling what will happen to the costs of oil and natural gas. Most of all, it's the right thing to do.

Would you like to help MIP&L get out the word about these free but valuable audits, by putting an article in your newsletter, making an announcement during worship, or contacting others? If so let us know at MIPandL@MIPandL.org.

You can also visit <http://www.masssave.com/residential/> and click on the link "Home Energy Assessment" for more information. **Remember, change starts at home.**

LIGHT-EMITTING DIODES (LEDs) NOW AVAILABLE FROM MIP&L



LEDs are now available as replacements for incandescent and fluorescent lights. A light-emitting diode is a semiconductor light source. When the diode is switched on, energy is released in the form of photons. Recent materials technology advances have increased LED light output, and led to the invention of the white light LED suitable for more lighting applications.

One of the key advantages of LED-based lighting is its high efficiency. Although more expensive than incandescent and fluorescent bulbs, LEDs can last much longer, and are very economical choices for locations such as the ceilings of house of worship sanctuaries where frequent changing of bulbs is impractical.

MIP&L has access to a top-of-the-line array of LED's, sold by an American company called Illumination America. We can assist houses of worship who are faced with the dilemma of having to change out hard-to-reach incandescent or fluorescent bulbs. Please email or call us if you would like assistance purchasing or installing LED lighting.

SENATE GRIDLOCK

Not long after progress on a comprehensive climate and energy bill collapsed, there were reports that a bill including a national renewable energy standard, "Home Star" – financial incentives for homeowner energy efficiency, and provisions to improve the safety of off-shore drilling would be filed in the Senate.

The Senate leadership then reported that they didn't even have the 60 votes to pass such a modest legislation. According to the American Wind Energy Association, the lack of a renewable standard in the energy bill would put 85,000 jobs in the industry at risk. This is a failure of our political system, that ignores the scientific facts, the economic realities and the will of the American people.

There is still hope however that such a bill can be passed in September. We ask you to continue to call and write your Senators to urge them to pass these important provisions.

TAKE THE TEN PERCENT CHALLENGE.



In the wake of the Gulf oil disaster, we all need to redouble our efforts to reduce our dependence on dirty and dangerous forms of energy. To help faith communities participate, we've launched the 10% Challenge — please join us today.

By taking the 10% Challenge in your congregation, you pledge to reduce your carbon footprint by 10/10/10. If we each reduce our consumption a little bit, we'll come that much closer to reducing our dependence on oil.

While oil companies and ineffective government oversight were directly responsible for the gulf disaster, we all bear some responsibility for our part in this fossil fuel-based economy. That means we must all be part of the solution, by taking steps that reduce our reliance on dangerous and dirty energy — from driving less, to reducing waste and using the most energy-efficient appliances.

It's time to recognize our responsibility and stop taking reckless risks with human life and with nature, which is precious, sacred and (as God called it) "good."

There are still thousands of oil rigs in operation in the Gulf of Mexico and there will be for some time. **But as long as we continue to use oil, we can work together to reduce our consumption as much as possible — while looking for alternatives and making a transition away from this dangerous, harmful source of energy.**

New energy sources are available close to home — solar and wind are grossly underutilized and would create cleaner, safer jobs for millions of workers. Energy efficiency is the simplest and fastest way to reduce pollution — and it saves money. A clean energy future is on the horizon; we just need the will to make it a reality.

Through the 10% Challenge, the faith community can take concrete steps to move us away from reliance on oil and the environmental destruction that it causes. And, we'll be leading by example.

This devastation has to stop. Stopping it starts with us. Join hundreds of other faith communities around the country in taking the 10% Challenge today.

P.S. Don't know how to reduce your carbon footprint? Don't know what a carbon footprint is? **Sign up for the 10% Challenge Q&A Webinar on September 14** to find out some practical, low-cost ways to get started! It's free. Simply follow this link to register: <https://www.1gotomeeting.com/register/351078952>

SEPTEMBER 11 IS A NATIONAL DAY OF SERVICE AND REMEMBRANCE

In April, 2009, President Barack Obama signed into law the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, which included federal authorization to establish September 11 as an annually recognized National Day of Service and Remembrance. Growing out of work by MyGoodDeed.org – a group led by folks with family members who died in the World Trade Center – the September 11 Service Day presents an opportunity for the community of faith to join with their communities through service.

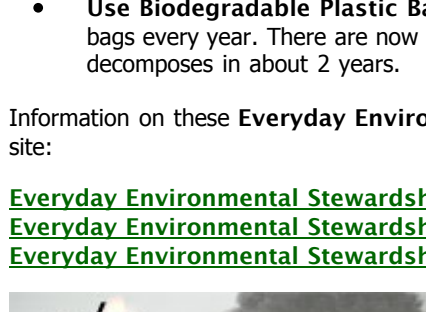
What better way to serve than transforming your House of Worship and in the process teaching members of your congregation (and others) how to transform their homes, schools, workplaces into more environmentally friendly places.

Here are some ways:

- **Install Interior "storm" windows** — These easy-to-make windows significantly increase thermal performance of windows. Windows are a big source of heat loss. So make and install these windows in basements, at windows never opened, and at all of your windows. Those that are opened in spring, summer and fall can be taken down in spring, stored, then put back up in fall.
- **Install CFLs** — There is a Compact Fluorescent Light for virtually every use, including those that are dimmable. A CFL uses only about 25% the electricity as an incandescent bulb.
- **Use Biodegradable Plastic Bags** — The average family will throw out about 1,500 plastic trash bags every year. There are now good alternatives. The best is oxo-biodegradable plastic, which decomposes in about 2 years.

Information on these **Everyday Environmental Stewardship** actions can be found at the MIP&L web site:

- [Everyday Environmental Stewardship: Interior Storm Windows](#)
- [Everyday Environmental Stewardship: Compact Fluorescent Light bulbs](#)
- [Everyday Environmental Stewardship: Biodegradable Plastic Bags](#)

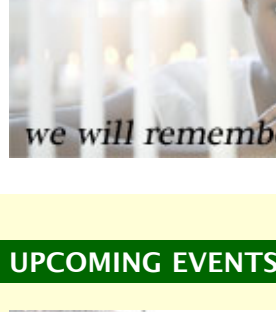


On **Saturday September 11, 2010 starting at 9 AM**, MIP&L is participating in a National Service Day event with

St. Mary's Dorchester
14 Cushing Avenue
Dorchester, MA 02125
617-282-3181

www.stmarysdorchester.org

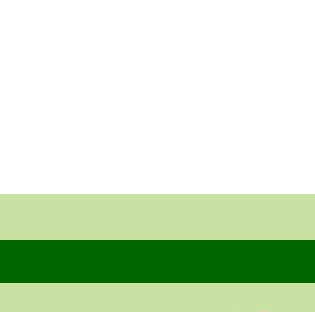
UPCOMING EVENTS



Grace Episcopal Church in Medford is joining forces with Cambridge's Home Energy Efficiency Team (HEET) to host a weatherization barn-raising at Grace Church on **Monday, August 30th**.

The event will help Grace Church implement some of the changes recommended by their MIP&L Environmental Stewardship Assessment in a fun and very cost effective way. It will also be a provide great chance to continue their environmental stewardship mission and help the members of the parish and the community learn how to save energy in their homes.

For more information about the event and to find out how you can participate, visit [the Greening Grace Blog](#). People of all faiths and experience levels are welcome.



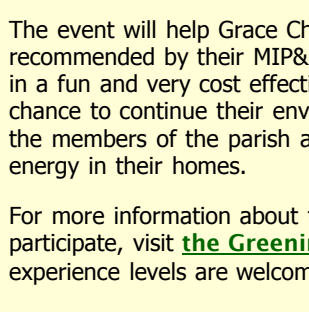
SAVE THE DATE!

Join us for a celebration of **FIRST PARISH NEEDHAM, MASSACHUSETTS' FIRST ENERGY STAR CONGREGATION** on **OCTOBER 23, 2010 at 9 AM**.

First Parish Needham, UUA,
23 Dedham Avenue
Needham, MA 02492-3007

Details to follow

MCAN Conference



When: **Sunday, October 24 from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm**

Where: Clark University, Worcester, MA

The conference will feature a variety of panels and workshops on topical issues relevant to current and future climate activists. MCAN conference-goers run the gamut from local officials to climate activists to average citizens of Massachusetts concerned about the threat of global warming. The conference, which attracts between 250 and 300 conferees each year, is being held for the ninth time and for the first time outside the metro-Boston area.

Peace and blessings,

Your friends at MIP&L